

ELMORE COUNTY

Honorable Mary Elizabeth Culberson

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PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Family Resource Center-Secure permanent funding and building
2. Substance Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Education
3. Truancy, Dropout and Absenteeism Prevention

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Expand the Elmore County Family Resource Center

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Increase financial support for the Family Resource Center through hard money, grants, the County Commission, foundations, Family Preservation, Alabama UPS and At-Risk funds
- Secure funding for permanent facility for the Family Resource Center
- Continue development of resources and support programs that can be offered or referred by the Family Resource Center

Implement an effective system of substance abuse prevention and intervention in Elmore County

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Secure financial support for a substance abuse prevention and intervention program available to Elmore County families
- Identify programs that can be utilized in the community and in the schools
- Implement the programs utilizing the resources and supports of the Family Resource Center

Increase community awareness of the many health issues related to children (drugs, STDs, pregnancy, Etc)

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Develop and implement a "lunch and Learn" program where members of the community are provided information and resources on a regular basis on a variety of children's health topics to promote the awareness of the issues
- Make educational materials and programs available so school personnel, teachers, church groups, and parents to increase their awareness of children's health related issues

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Provide local Substance Abuse Treatment Programs

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Work towards a physical facility for the Elmore County Family Resource Center so that a facility to house substance abuse programs will be available within Elmore County
- Work with the Health Committee to locate and fund appropriate treatment programs to be offered at the Family Resource Center
- Support Elmore County's UPS grant application for treatment and prevention efforts with students and their families

Establish a weekend Deterrent Program for Juvenile Delinquents

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support Sheriff Franklin's grant efforts to start a weekend program for juveniles appearing in Elmore County Juvenile Court. The program would meet for eight hours on Saturday. The juvenile Judge would determine the number of weekends a child would attend the program.
- Provide community awareness of the program and solicit mentors, tutors, counselors, and speakers for the program.

Re-Open the Short-Term Juvenile Detention Facility

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Explore all grant options for the operation of a Juvenile Detention Facility.
- Work with the County Commission to secure funding for the facility.

Education - Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Increase School Attendance/Prevent Dropouts

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support seeking funding for a Truancy Camp Program for children who have been referred to Juvenile Court for Truancy. Both the child and the parents would be required to attend the camp for two Saturday for eight hours each day. The purpose would be to provide information and counseling to the participants.
- Encourage volunteers to be mentors of truant children.
- Seek funding for the Elmore County Family Resource Center so that physical space is available for tutoring and remedial training. Support Elmore County's UPS grant application that would provide funding for additional attendance officers for Elmore County Schools.

Increase County-wide opportunities for obtaining the GED

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Seek funding for the current Adult Learning Center for materials and staff.
- Help secure locations and volunteers in areas that do not currently have Adult Education Classes available.
- Publicize the fact that GED preparation materials and practice tests are available on-line.

Early Care and Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Lack of enforcement for truancy

Policy Council Action Steps:

- facilitate the proactive involvement of the juvenile officers.
- Encourage the Juvenile Court to punish the parents of the truant students to the full extent of the law.

Basic supply needs for young school children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Identify donors.
- Identify the specific younger elementary-age classes that have the greatest need for software, hand sanitizer, basic school supplies, electronics (TVs, computers), books, etc.
- Facilitate the selection of classes who will receive the donations and the delivery of those items.

Lack of breakfast provided by school lunchrooms to younger elementary-age children, especially those who qualify for free or reduced price lunch

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Approach the Elmore County Board of Education about the possibility of offering school breakfasts.
- Identify grant possibilities to fund school breakfasts.

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Industry Recruitment

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Work with city, county and state government to improve transportation infrastructure by providing affordable public transportation linking Elmore and Montgomery Counties
- Work with the Elmore County Economic Development Authority to recruit jobs, and create and retain jobs from existing business and industry
- Work with FIT (Focused Industry Training) to improve the quality of Elmore County's labor pool

Increase Public Awareness of Education Funding

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Talk with the Leadership Elmore County class to see if they would take this on as a class project
- Have Board of Education representative speak to citizen/civic groups on the issue
- Send newsletters home with students showing that on a \$100,00 home, a person pays \$70 (7 mills) to education

Parent Involvement and Skills

- Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Establish county-wide, easily accessible parenting classes for at-risk youths and their parents

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Elmore County Family Resource Center is providing parenting classes for parents of children age 0-5 and 12 years old and older. Will work with the center to establish classes for parents of children age 6-12
- Will continue to work with the parenting program in Tallassee and in Holtville called Parenting with Love and Limits

Educate parents concerning the warning signs of drug and alcohol use

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Elmore County Family Resource Center will be a source of information for parents regarding drug and alcohol abuse
- Will continue to make contact with state, federal, and private sources of information to obtain informational brochures concerning drug and alcohol use that can be distributed at schools, local businesses and other local sources
- Will continue efforts with Safety and Health Committees in the education of parents regarding drug and alcohol abuse and will support Elmore County's UPS application for substance abuse prevention

Educate elementary and junior high school students about sexual abuse

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Will coordinate with local agencies (Child Protect, DHR, etc) in providing information that can be utilized by families and children in preventing sexual abuse
- Will work with the school system in creating a curriculum for educating students regarding sexual abuse

Policy Recommendation

1. Consistent funding for Department of Children's Affairs, Department of Mental Health and Department of Human Resources.

Accomplishments

1. Implementation Substance Abuse Prevention SIG grant with unified Prevention System/ADECA awarded
2. Program implemented with Family Resource Center
3. Training completed to implement Motherread/Fatheread curriculum.